

## Sample Internal Memo

Please note, as with all resources included in this toolkit, this is a *sample* and should be tailored to the needs of your organization and/or community. Additionally, as policy developments and census operations unfold, samples and templates may need to be adjusted to address these changes and progress.

### 2020 Census Funding Opportunity

Challenges Facing the Census - We know the census is facing significant threats to its success - the bureau is without a permanent, Senate-confirmed leader; the census has experienced delayed and insufficient funding; the first online census faces tech challenges; and the recent addition of a citizenship question creates the potential for lower response rates and participation.

#### Implications for [state]

- The digital divide is a lived reality for our rural communities.
- [state] already has a number of parts that are considered among the hardest to count in the country: ([use Census 2020 Hard-to-Count map](#))

#### Why We Need a Fair and Accurate Count - The 3 D's: Data, Dollars, and Districts

- All of the data we depend on is based on the census. If we don't have a fair and accurate census, all of the metrics we're reliant on will be erroneous.
- Federal funds are reliant on census data, especially block grants. If all [state] citizens aren't counted, [state] inaccurately receives fewer federal dollars.
- Redistricting will be coming up and the 2020 Census will hugely affect it. Even if we don't get involved with something as political as redistricting, the fact that the census affects our representation from the House to the local level is undeniable.

#### Opportunities for [state] Funders

- We have the opportunity to help our communities understand the importance of the census with a communications campaign – the census only comes around every ten years and folks need either a reminder or first-time education on why it's so important to respond. Since this census will be digital, a communications campaign could include that educational piece.
- We have the opportunity to engage community foundations since they're the trusted entities in their communities.
- We have the opportunity to engage the business community and local chambers of commerce since they are also reliant on the census.
- We have the opportunity to engage local government officials and local government associations. Not only are they trusted local entities, but they're affected by the census more than just about anyone.

- We have an opportunity to launch a RFP to fund Get Out the Count (GOTC) on-the-ground efforts in local communities. Given the government's roll-back on funding door-to-door efforts, this is HUGELY important. The hard-to-count populations will especially need encouragement from those local groups whom they know they can trust.

## Timeline for Moving Forward

- We are arranging for a [state]-specific 2020 Census briefing
- Extensive dollars wouldn't need to be spent in 2018. Rather, 2018 would be spent on education: Educating ourselves; educating others, such as community foundations, business leaders, local chambers, local government officials, and potential GOTC community leaders; and gathering and learning from other funders' GOTC RFPs and writing our own for release in late 2018, with funds disbursed in the beginning of 2019.
- 2019 and 2020 are the years that will require more investment, including communications, work with local government, local chambers and businesses, and GOTC on-the-ground efforts.